

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

|                                     |   |    |     |    |     |
|-------------------------------------|---|----|-----|----|-----|
| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>            | TU2015KE145   |    |     |    |     |
| <b>Name of Service:</b>             | Little Folks Playschool   |    |     |    |     |
| <b>Address of Service:</b>          | Newtown, Rathangan, Co. Kildare   |    |     |    |     |
| <b>Eircode:</b>                     | R51 P030  |    |     |    |     |
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Margo Conlon  |    |     |    |     |
| <b>Service type:</b>                | Sessional   |    |     |    |     |
| <b>Date of Inspection:</b>          | 02/04/2025  |    |     |    |     |
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b>   | <table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>13</td> <td>PM</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table> | AM | 13  | PM | N/A |
| AM                                  | 13  | PM | N/A |    |     |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Early Years Inspectorate,<br>Child and Family Agency<br>Suite 7 Vista Primary Care Centre<br>Ballymore Eustace Road<br>Naas Co. Kildare W91 X38W |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | F. Maher, LA. Webster  |
| <b>Title:</b>                                   | Early Years Inspectors   |

### Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

|                                 |                 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Conditions if applicable</b> | Not applicable. |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|

### Description of service

This private service offers sessional care and education to children between the ages of 2-6 years old. The service opens Monday-Friday from 08:45am-11:45am for 38 weeks of the pre-school year. While the service is registered to provide an afternoon session from 12:00pm-15:00pm, this is not currently offered.

The service is located in a purpose-built premises to the rear of the private home of the registered provider. One large pre-school room with sanitary facilities is provided and outdoor play areas are located to the front and side of the pre-school.

### Staffing

There were four adults present in the service, this included three adults working directly with the children and a work experience student. The registered provider does not work directly with the children but arrived at the service at 10:15 am for a short period of time.

### Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child, safety, premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

### Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

## Part III – Management and Staff

### Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,*
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and*

*(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-*

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,*
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,*
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and*

*(d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.*

*(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.*

### Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

Five staff records were reviewed and included those of three staff members employed and/or present in the service, the registered provider and the work experience student.

(2)(a)(b)

Ten written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source, in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of five adults whose records were reviewed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all employed staff members. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

Three members of staff employed and who work directly with the children whose records were reviewed held a major award at Level 5 or higher in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

*(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.*

*(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)  
There were 13 children attending the service being supervised directly by 3 staff members during the inspection.

(3)  
The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day as specified in column (3) of Part 2 of Schedule 6.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

There was a good variety of age and developmentally appropriate toys, materials and equipment available for the children to use and play with during the day. Shelving units held easily accessible containers; photographs were placed on each container displaying their contents for the children. A combined sand and water tray was available with a variety of props, there were also well equipped areas of interest including, dress up, small world, kitchen/home corner and construction area. There was plenty of art and craft materials available including, paint, paper, crayons, play dough and materials for gluing, cutting and sticking. Children had planted pumpkin seeds and these were placed on a low-level table where the children could follow the growing progress of their plant. The resources and materials facilitated all types of play and learning and encouraged each child to experiment and use their imagination.

The outside play area facilitated areas for gross motor development such as running and playground games with the addition of a large wooden climbing frame, slide and a swing set.

Child sized tables and chairs were maintained in good condition in the pre-school room which ensured the children could sit comfortably for tabletop activities and when eating their snack. A child sized couch was available for any child wishing to sit, read or rest.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and provided the morning snack for all children. The snack observed included slices of buttered brown bread and slices of cheddar cheese along with water to drink. Fresh fruits pieces are also served during the week to add variety to the snack menu.

Drinking water was freely available at all times to the children during the morning.

The staff members advised they encouraged healthy eating practices with the children and incorporated discussions about food and food choices on a daily basis. The children were happy to advise the inspector of their knowledge of healthy and unhealthy food/drink choices during snack time.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

*A registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe.*

#### Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

The main entrance door to the service was secure and controlled by staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school service.

No hazards were observed indoors or in the outdoor area.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents.

##### Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper hand towel were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying and handwashing routines were well established and observed.

The pre-school and its environs were observed maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

##### Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection. During conversations with the staff members, they advised they were aware of the procedures to be followed to administer medicine safely to a child if required while attending the service.

##### Fire Safety:

All fire exits and the fire assembly point on the premises were easily recognisable and unobstructed; staff were familiar with the evacuation routes to exit the building in the event of an emergency occurring.

##### Outing:

The person in charge advised that the service has not gone on an outing in recent years but an outings policy is in place to guide practice.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

- Garda vetting was available for three staff members, the registered provider and one work experience student, however, one vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective Action

##### General Safety:

We have begun the vetting process with an online application and the certified documents have been submitted; this process is ongoing.

##### Preventive Action

We have marked this on our calendar to review all staff vetting once per year. We have also scheduled an email to ourselves to remind us to review staff vetting dates again this time next year.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### General Safety:

Document X 1

#### Summary Comment

It is acknowledged the re vetting process is underway, however, the requirement for Regulation 23 has not been met at this time as the updated disclosure document has not yet been issued. This area of the regulations will be reviewed at the time of the next inspection.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 25 - First aid

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.*

*(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-*

*(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and*

*(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

Two staff members present were trained in in first aid response (FAR) and were immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a)

The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the pre-school room.

(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available at all times to the adults caring for the children attending the service

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-

(a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and

(b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

A record in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises. The last recorded fire drill was dated 19 March 2025.

(b) There were records available detailing the maintenance of the smoke/fire detection system equipment in the service dated 3 March 2025.

(4)

A notice was displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.

### Non-Compliance Information

(b)

There was no documentary evidence available to demonstrate the firefighting equipment in the pre-school had been serviced since 2023.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective Action

The fire company has completed the required servicing.

#### Preventive Action

We have marked our calendar to remind us that this needs to be carried out again this time next year and scheduled an email for 11 months' time to remind us to book the service in with the company.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Document X 1 dated 28 April 2025.

## Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 26 (1)(b) has been met.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

## Compliance Information

The children were observed to be supervised at all times both indoors and outdoors by the staff members caring for them during the inspection.